UNITED
NATIONS

ST

Secretariat

ST/AI/412
5 January 1996

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management

Subject: SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY*

1. The Organization's policy for the achievement of gender equality is restated in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/282, which is being issued concurrently with the present instruction and supersedes all prior bulletins that introduced special measures for women.

2. The present instruction consolidates into one administrative issuance all the special measures introduced over the years to implement the principle of equal treatment of men and women stated in Article 8 of the Charter of the United Nations, and to increase the number of women at the Professional level and above. Administrative instruction ST/AI/382 of 3 March 1993 is hereby superseded. Departmental memoranda implementing all prior special measures are also cancelled.

Special measures applicable to the recruitment, appointment and promotion of women to posts at the Professional level and above

3. The purpose of the following special measures is to give effect to the Secretary-General's goals, which the General Assembly urged the Secretary-General to implement, 1/ of bringing the gender balance in the Secretariat to 35 per cent women overall in Professional posts by 1995, to 25 per cent women at the D-1 level and above by June 1997, and to 50-50 parity between men and women both overall and for positions at the D-1 level and above by the year 2000. Those goals apply Secretariat-wide to all categories of posts, including posts subject to geographical distribution, language posts, mission and mission-replacement posts, irrespective of the type or duration of the appointment

* Personnel Manual index No. 1176.

96-00280 (E)

(permanent, fixed-term, limited duration, one year or less) or of the series of the Staff Rules under which an appointment is to be given (100, 200 and 300 series). Progress towards gender parity is to be monitored overall, by category of posts at each level and for positions at the D-1 level and above.

4. The following special measures shall apply throughout the Secretariat to the filling of all vacant posts at the Professional level and above in every department or office that has not reached parity between men and women both overall and at the D-1 level and above. They shall remain in effect until the Secretary-General is satisfied that substantial progress towards parity has been made.

5. Whenever the Secretary-General has found it necessary to impose a recruitment freeze, requests for exceptions to the freeze shall be considered in a more favourable light if the recommended candidate is a woman.

6. In order to avoid the apparent circumvention of recruitment policies through the use of short-term appointments, the appointment of staff for periods of up to 11 months shall be exercised strictly on a one-time basis and the practice of perpetuating short-term contracts by means of short breaks in service shall be discontinued. A staff member serving under a short-term contract or a contract of less than one year at the P-2 or P-3 level may not receive an appointment of one year or more unless he or she successfully passes a competitive examination in the appropriate occupational group. Eligibility for such examinations shall be limited to candidates encumbering established posts who are nationals of Member States that are unrepresented, underrepresented or below the mid-point of their desirable range.

7. Since the present gender distribution within the Secretariat does not provide a sufficient pool of women candidates who could be promoted to higher-level posts within the time-frame set by the Secretary-General and the General Assembly, the following special provisions shall apply to increase the pool of women eligible for consideration in all decisions on appointment, particularly to higher-level posts. Women who have been in the service of the Organization, including United Nations programmes, for at least one year, under any type of appointment or as consultants, shall be eligible to apply as internal candidates for vacancies at the Professional levels and above, i.e. they may apply for United Nations internal vacancy announcements. In accordance with staff regulation 4.4, the same considerations shall apply to women serving with specialized agencies and subsidiary organs within the common system. If found eligible to apply for an internal vacancy announcement under this provision, a woman candidate shall be expected to document that she meets the qualifications and experience requirements for the post, due regard being paid also to the principle of equitable geographic distribution. Appointments of one year or more at the P-2 and P-3 levels shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph 6 above.

8. The Office of Human Resources Management shall assist all departments and offices, in particular those falling short of the targets set out in paragraph 3 above, in identifying women candidates who meet the minimum qualifications for any vacant post. For that purpose, the Office of Human Resources Management shall review potential women candidates within the department or office

concerned and outside, including those serving in other departments or offices, in regional commissions, or on mission appointment. The Office of Human Resources Management shall also seek women candidates outside the Organization by advertising the post in appropriate publications and by seeking assistance from Governments and other external sources such as universities or professional women's associations.

9. Vacancies for posts at the P-5 level and above in departments and offices that do not have gender parity at those levels must be advertised internally and externally, except when the Office of Human Resources Management has agreed to waive the requirement of an external vacancy announcement, as may be done when fully qualified and suitable women candidates have already been identified from within the Organization or from the roster or another direct source of recruitment.

10. If any candidate is to be recruited over the normal maximum desirable range for a given country, such exceptions should be made only for women, in limited cases, in relation to posts for which they are the best qualified candidates.

11. Similarly, and in order to expand the pool of women available for recruitment at the lower Professional levels, exceptionally well qualified women serving under short-term appointments or appointments of less than one year at the P-2 or P-3 levels and encumbering an established post may, on a limited basis, be allowed to take the competitive examination referred to in paragraph 6 above, even though they are nationals of Member States above the mid-point of their desirable range or of overrepresented Member States.

12. On a trial basis, General Service staff members, the majority of whom are women, shall be allowed to take the P-3 national competitive examination when they meet the requirements as to education, experience and nationality applicable to other candidates. The results shall be reported to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, with the request that the measure be approved for the future, should the results be positive.

13. In order to increase the number of women considered for promotion, the rules on seniority may be flexibly applied so that the cumulative seniority of a woman staff member is considered for purposes of regular and accelerated promotions. The cumulative seniority of a woman staff member shall be calculated as an average of the years in her present grade and the years accrued in her immediately preceding grade. For instance, if seniority in her present P-5 grade is three years and seniority in her previous P-4 grade is seven years, cumulative seniority should be five years in her present grade. This policy shall be applied as needed to afford women the requisite seniority for promotion and shall not apply in those cases where averaging would have an adverse impact on a woman's eligibility for promotion.

14. The Office of Human Resources Management or the local personnel office shall make every effort to identify qualified women staff members who, under normal seniority criteria or according to the averaging technique outlined above, have the minimum requisite seniority for accelerated promotion. Those staff members shall be encouraged to apply for the post to be filled and, if

appropriate under the applicable placement and promotion procedures, shall be reviewed by departments or offices and by the appointment and promotion bodies.

15. Vacancies in the category and level of posts falling short of the target figures set out in paragraph 3 above shall be filled, when there are one or more female candidates, by one of those candidates provided that (a) her qualifications meet all the requirements for the vacant post and (b) her qualifications are substantially equal or superior to those of competing male candidates. Particular emphasis should be given to demonstrated performance and potential, as well as to increasing the number of women from developing countries, particularly those countries that are unrepresented or underrepresented. When the qualifications of one or more female candidates match all the requirements for the vacant post and the department recommends a male candidate, the department must submit to the Office of Human Resources Management for transmission to the appointment and promotion bodies a written analysis, with appropriate supporting documentation, indicating how the qualifications of the recommended candidate are superior to those of the female candidates who were not recommended.

16. Except for posts filled through competitive examination, foreseeable vacancies that occur may not be filled by a male candidate until the Office of Human Resources Management has certified that, despite the best efforts of all concerned for a period of at least six months, it has not been possible to identify and secure a qualified woman candidate. In filling vacancies at the P-5 level and above, departments and offices recommending a male candidate shall also be required to demonstrate that they have considered both internal and external candidates.

17. Similar principles shall apply for all appointments that are not subject to review by the appointment and promotion bodies, whether the appointment is made under the 100, 200 or 300 series of the Staff Rules. In every case, no male candidate shall be appointed until serious efforts to find suitable women candidates have been made and documented and the Office of Human Resources Management or the relevant personnel office is satisfied that, despite the best efforts of all concerned, it has not been possible to identify and secure a qualified woman candidate.

Special measures applicable to career development

18. Heads of departments and offices are requested to emphasize upward mobility and career development opportunities for all their staff, General Service and related categories as well as Professionals, women as well as men. The purpose of the following measures is to ensure that women are properly considered in respect of several particularly important aspects of the process.

19. Whenever temporary assignment against a higher-level post becomes available owing to temporary staff movements (mission assignment or replacement, sabbatical or other leave) or to the time required to fill a vacancy, all departments and offices are requested to undertake a review of their qualified women staff at the appropriate level for temporary assignment against higher-level posts, leading, when the necessary conditions are met, to the grant of a special post allowance or to the assumption of responsibilities as officer-in-

charge. The performance of higher functions for a significant period shall be recorded in the staff member's file even if it does not lead to the grant of a special post allowance or the assumption of responsibilities as officer-in-charge. If temporary assistance is obtained, it should be at the lower level of the post whose incumbent has been assigned to higher-level functions. In the event that there are no qualified women in the department or office, the Office of Human Resources Management should be consulted to provide names of women from other departments or offices who would be suitable for such temporary assignments.

20. Women in both the Professional category and above and those in the General Service and related categories are encouraged to inform the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and/or the Office of Human Resources Management of their interest in serving in special missions or in established missions. The Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management shall ensure that those women are seriously considered as and when mission assignments become available. All programme managers are requested to release such staff for available mission assignments.

Training and increased awareness of gender issues

21. To foster better understanding between men and women and to erode subjective obstacles to the advancement of women within the Organization, the Office of Human Resources Management shall institute compulsory training programmes designed to foster the desired changes in management culture, enhance awareness and ability to deal with issues of gender discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and provide skills training.

22. The Office of Human Resources Management shall ensure that women at the P-5 and D-1 levels are included in people management skills and other management training programmes to encourage their participation in the change in management culture, by promoting better understanding among both women and men of different leadership styles, exploring better means of working together and creating a more responsive working environment for all.

23. Induction and orientation courses shall explain the principle of gender equality mandated by Article 8 of the Charter and provide guidelines for promoting equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat. Induction and orientation courses shall also provide information on the functioning, power structure and value system of the Organization and on where information can be obtained in relation to career development and opportunities.

24. All departments and offices shall encourage mentoring of all newly recruited women by experienced staff members. Mentoring may entail introducing the new staff members to office personnel, providing informal guidance on the workings of the office, offering career advice and familiarizing the new staff member with avenues of recourse for addressing problems that may arise.

25. All supervisors are requested to ensure that copies of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/282 and of the present instruction are distributed desk to desk and to discuss these documents with their staff.

Work/family issues

26. The Secretary-General is committed to promote a supportive work environment and to foster the necessary attitudinal changes. To that effect, the feasibility of a number of measures that would facilitate equal participation of men and women in the work of the Organization is under active consideration in the Secretariat. Such measures include flexible working hours, part-time work, job-sharing schemes, child and elder care, special leave arrangements and the preparation of guidelines to help to resolve conflicts between mobility and family commitments. The existing rules will be amended in due course to reflect the decisions taken by the Secretary-General, after consultation with the staff, in the light of the ongoing review.

Impact of reorganization/retrenchment

27. Whenever the Secretary-General has found it necessary to reorganize one or more departments or offices or to retrench a number of posts, a formal monitoring process shall be established within the Office of Human Resources Management, in close cooperation with each department or office concerned, in order to ensure that women are not disproportionately affected by the exercise. Goals shall be set by each department or office, in close consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management, to provide a basis for monitoring and analysis.

Record-keeping

28. Each department or office shall be responsible for maintaining statistics showing the current distribution of women and men at each level and category, including General Service and related categories, in terms of both posts subject to geographical distribution and the total number of staff, and their projected proportions for the following two years. The heads of departments or offices shall submit quarterly reports to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, using a format designed for that purpose in consultation with the Integrated Management Information System, as shown in the annex to the present instruction. All recommendations for filling posts, whether by recruitment, extension or promotion shall be accompanied by an explanation of how the recommended action will affect the representation of women at the level concerned and overall.

29. For the purpose of assisting departments and offices in identifying women candidates for available vacancies, the Office of Human Resources Management shall maintain a roster of external candidates that reflects gender. For the same purpose, the Office of Human Resources Management shall also develop and maintain a skills database of all staff members, including General Service and related categories, by occupational groupings and reflecting relevant data, including but not limited to gender, educational qualifications and any area of special knowledge or experience, technical and language skills, years of work experience and positions held.

30. The Office of Human Resources Management shall maintain an inventory of posts and staff by gender, occupation, level and duty station, based on the quarterly departmental summaries described in paragraph 28 above, and shall

include gender distribution statistics in its regular statistical summaries. The Office of Human Resources Management shall include in its summaries statistical analyses on the number and percentage of women by nationality on all promotion registers and appointment lists, and specifying what percentage of those promoted or appointed from outside, within each grade, are women. The Office of Human Resources Management shall report regularly to the Secretary-General on the results achieved. The data shall be included in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat and the improvement of the status of women. Progress in meeting the objectives of the special measures shall be described by narratives for those of a qualitative nature and by numerical means, including the use of tables, bar charts and other visual representations, for those that are quantifiable.

Notes

1/ Resolution 49/167 of 23 December 1994.

Annex

GENDER DISTRIBUTION TABLES Duty Station / Office: _____

Table 1) Gender distribution of Professional and higher level staff in posts subject to geographical distribution

	USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1		TOTAL >= D-1		GRAND TOTAL	
	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I
P+																						
%F/I																						

Table 2) Gender distribution of Professional staff in posts with special language requirements

		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1			GRAND TOTAL	
		#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I		#F	#I
PR														
%F/I														

Table 3) Gender distribution of Professional staff with mission appointments or on mission detail, and staff in the Field Service category

	USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1		TOTAL >= D-1		GRAND TOTAL	
	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I
P+																						
%F/I																						
					FS7		FS6		FS5		FS4		FS3		FS2		FS1				GRAND TOTAL	
					#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I			#F	#I
FS																						
%F/I																						

Table 4) Gender distribution of staff in the General Services and related categories

			P-L		O-L			GRAND TOTAL	
			#F	#P	#F	#P		#F	#P
GS									
%F/P									
REL.									
%F/P									
			#F	#P	#F	#P		#F	#P
G&									
%F/P									

As-of-date: _____

/...

GENDER DISTRIBUTION TABLES Duty Station / Office: _____

Table 5) Gender distribution of all Professional staff and 200 series project personnel

	USG		ASG		D-2 L-7		D-1 L-6		P-5 L-5		P-4 L-4		P-3 L-3		P-2 L-2		P-1 L-1		TOTAL >= D-1		GRAND TOTAL	
	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I
5a) Staff with appointments of one year or more																						
S100																						
%F/I																						
S200																						
%F/I																						
S300																						
%F/I																						
	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I
1 YR+																						
%F/I																						
5b) Staff with appointments of less than one year																						
S100																						
%F/I																						
S200																						
%F/I																						
S300																						
%F/I																						
	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I	#F	#I
1 YR-																						
%F/I																						
5c) All staff regardless of appointment duration																						
S100																						
%F/I																						
S200																						
%F/I																						
S300																						
%F/I																						
	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P	#F	#I #P
ALL																						
%F/I																						
%F/P																						

As-of-date: _____

/...

GENDER DISTRIBUTION TABLES Duty Station / Office: _____

1 **Legend:**

TOTAL >= D-1	-	Total for posts at the D-1 level and above
#F	-	Number of female incumbents
#I	-	Total number of incumbents
#P	-	Total number of posts
%F/I	-	Percentage of female vs. total incumbents
%F/P	-	Percentage of female incumbents vs. total number of posts
PR	-	Professional category
P+	-	Professional and higher categories
FS	-	Field Service category
GS	-	General Services category
REL.	-	Related categories
G&	-	General Services and related categories
P-L	-	Principal level of General Services and related categories staff
O-L	-	Other levels of General Services and related categories staff
S100	-	Series 100
S200	-	Series 200
S300	-	Series 300
1 YR+	-	Appointments of one year or more
1 YR-	-	Appointments less than one year
ALL	-	All Professional staff and series 200 project personnel

2. **Filling istructions for tables 1, 2 and 3:**
   - establish number of female and total incumbents for the selected group of staff, by grade (select staff with appointment status "geography" for table 1, with status "language" for table 2, with appointment status "mission" or appointment type "LD" or movement status "mission detail", as well as Field Service staff, for table 3);
   - enter these numbers in the first data row under #F and #I, respectively;
   - aggregate USG to D-1 for subtotal and USG to P-1 for grand total;
   - compute 100 * #F / #I and enter it in the row labelled "%F/I" in the "#F" columns.

3. **Filling istructions for table 4:**
   - establish number of female incumbents and total posts for the selected category and level (P-L, O-L);
   - enter these numbers in the first data row under #F and #P, respectively;
   - aggregate P-L and O-L for grand total;
   - compute 100 * #F / #P and enter it in the row labelled "%F/P" in the "#F" columns.

4 **Filling istructions for table 5:**
   - process subtables as indicated in (b), based on rule series and appointment duration;
   - establish total number of posts by level and enter in the row labelled "%F/I" under "ALL" in the #P column;
   - compute 100 * #F / #P and enter it in the row labelled "%F/P" under "ALL" in the "#F" columns.

 As-of-date: _____